

CAPTURE OF WASHINGTON.

AN EVENT THAT OCCURRED SIXTY-SIX YEARS AGO YESTERDAY.

A Superior Force of Militia Retreating Before the Advance of the British—How the Portrait of Gen. Washington was Saved.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 25.—Sixty-six years ago yesterday the city of Washington was captured by British troops and the Capitol and other public buildings were burned. The capture of the city was preceded by the battle of Bladensburg. Accounts of this battle differ.

Mr. Lossing says that a hot engagement occurred between a superior force of the British and their American troops before the latter retreated, and that 500 Englishmen were killed and wounded. Mr. Nicholas Callan, an old resident of Washington, who, although a boy when the battle occurred, remembers it very distinctly, says that very little fighting was done, and that a superior force of militia retreated pell-mell before the advance of the British. As Mr. Callan's father was one of the militia, his son's version is likely to be correct. Much nonsense has been written about the capture of Washington. The fact is that the catastrophe was mainly due to the fears of Gen. Armstrong, then Secretary of War, and the cowardice of a large force of poorly-drilled militia. Both Gen. Armstrong and the militia were afterward censured by a committee of Congress, which was appointed to investigate.

In July, 1814, it was rumored that a large force of British soldiers had sailed from the West Indies with the purpose of landing on the shores of Chesapeake Bay and destroying Baltimore and Washington. No particular fears seem to have been entertained for the safety of the capital by President Madison and his cabinet. Gen. Winder was in command of the Fourth Military District, which embraced the District of Columbia, and he had 2,000 men scattered over quite a large area of country, under him.

As soon as the British, under command of Gen. Ross, who was afterward killed at the battle of Stony Point, landed at Benedict, on the shore of the Chesapeake, Gen. Winder became impressed with the fact that Washington would be assaulted. He communicated his fears to Mr. Madison and 15,000 militia from Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia were placed at his disposal. Commodore Barney came up the Potomac to the Patuxent River, with a schooner and thirteen armed barges, and sailed up that stream to its head waters, where he thought he was safe from pursuit, and joined his forces to those of Gen. Winder. Gen. Ross marched through Maryland and into Virginia, and the British General says that Gen. Winder had 3,000 effective men. He probably had 4,000 ineffective militiamen besides the number of Commodore Barney's men, not to mention the British.

On the night of the 23d of August, 1814, it was known in Washington that the British were approaching. The American forces were scattered, and Baltimore and Washington turnpike, a short distance west of Bladensburg, a village about six miles from this city, Gen. Ross was marching his army toward Washington.

At about 8 o'clock on the morning of the 24th the Cabinet met at the Executive Mansion, prepared to meet an emergency, and the Cabinet, attended by a small escort, for the scene of the fight. Upon their arrival the camp was found to be in full retreat, and the British General seemed to prevail among the militiamen.

The British, however, had 2,000 men, and Gen. Ross, who was near the British General, was convinced that the British would not dare attack for the American troops. He dismounted from his horse and ordered a messenger to ride as fast as possible to the Executive Mansion and inform Mrs. Madison to leave the city with all possible speed. She packed what articles of value could be conveniently taken, and a carriage was started for Mr. Madison's place, at Montpelier, Va. Before her departure she directed two servants, John and George, to burn the house in the building and, in case it was fired by the troops, to save the famous portrait of Washington, by Stuart. These domestics, finding that the British were near, took refuge in the stable, in which they remained until the fire was put out and secreted it. It now hangs in the White House. A vast amount of gush has been written upon the presentation of the picture.

Even Mr. Lossing, in one of his books, describes Mrs. Madison as saying to a couple of gentlemen who informed her of the victory of the British, "I will let it fall into the hands of the British."

The battle began about noon, and Commodore Barney's men stood the brunt of it for some time. He was finally wounded. The British troops, however, and Gen. Armstrong's corps, retreated to the corner of Fifteenth and M Streets, where the British Corps, had gone out of the front. When they returned most of them found that their families had already fled from the city. The British troops, however, were still in the city, down Maryland Avenue toward the Capitol a shot was fired from a private house owned by a gentleman named Sewall, an old Ross. He was not hurt. His wife, however, was severely wounded and the troops surrounded the house and burned it to the ground. She fired the shot that never left her hand.

BAND SAWYER, also man who understands an upright moulder. \$600 Nord last st. BOSTON, MASS.—W. E. MORSE, 100 Franklin St.

GORDON PRESSMAN wanted; also, job com- pector; state wags. Address of P. Box 175, San Francisco.**A SMART BOY** to wait on tables and make himself useful in saloon. J. HAMILTON, 148 Chambers St., New York.**A CHANCE** for families to go West; partly leaves Sat. 7; assistance rendered families to go West. Children Ad Soc., 19 East 40th st.**A STOUT BOY** to make himself useful and drive a team. A. COOPER, 100 Franklin St., New York.**A GOOD STAMPER** for embossers wanted; stock work and good wares, at 22 Worcester St.**A STRONG boy** wanted to carry out parcels; please bring recommendation. 49 Cortlandt St.**A YOUNG MAN** wanted in open orders; a good worker, good wages, \$125 per month. 100 Franklin St.**A FISHING** girl wanted to work in a new shop, and inform Mrs. Madison to leave the city with all possible speed. She packed what articles of value could be conveniently taken, and a carriage was started for Mr. Madison's place, at Montpelier, Va.

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BUTCHER WANTED—Understanding beef and pork business thoroughly; no other need apply. \$500 av.**BUTCHER** wanted; half medium and eighth Gordon St.**A GOOD CHORE** man wanted to work in a general store; wages, \$125 per month. 100 Franklin St.**A GOOD CHORE** man wanted; good wages, \$125 per month. 100 Franklin St.**A GOOD CHORE** man wanted; good wages, \$125 per month. 100 Franklin St.**A GOOD CHORE** man wanted; good wages, \$125 per month. 100 Franklin St.**A GOOD CHORE** man wanted; good wages, \$125 per month. 100 Franklin St.**A GOOD CHORE** man wanted; good wages, \$125 per month. 100 Franklin St.**A GOOD CHORE** man wanted; good wages, \$125 per month. 100 Franklin St.

THE SARATOGA RACES.

GROTS, SPRINGFIELD, GOLD BUG, AND CHIMNEY SWEEP THE WINNERS.

SARATOGA, Aug. 25.—The outlook for the races this morning was rather discouraging, a cold wave, accompanied by a light rain, succeeding the intense heat of the past few days. Toward noon, however, the management announced that the programme would be carried out. When the bell rang for the horses to come to the post the stand was only partly filled, the ladies wearing wraps and the gentlemen overcoats. As the day progressed, the crowd to clear up and grow warmer, and by the time the programme was concluded it became necessary to dispense with extra clothing. The track was dry, and the American tracks before the latter were retired, and that 500 Englishmen were killed and wounded. Mr. Nicholas Callan, an old resident of Washington, who, although a boy when the battle occurred, remembers it very distinctly, says that very little fighting was done, and that a superior force of militia re-treated pell-mell before the advance of the British. As Mr. Callan's father was one of the militia, his son's version is likely to be correct. Much nonsense has been written about the capture of Washington. The fact is that the catastrophe was mainly due to the fears of Gen. Armstrong, then Secretary of War, and the cowardice of a large force of poorly-drilled militia. Both Gen. Armstrong and the militia were afterward censured by a committee of Congress, which was appointed to investigate.

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